

Final Recommendations of the KART Housing Taskforce

July 16, 2010

1. Lack of planning for the future living arrangements of a child with ASD and other developmental disabilities.

Children should be groomed from an early age, that they are a participant in society. We see the importance of encouraging people to do and say things for themselves. Therefore, education and life skills should be provided across the spectrum; everyone deserves a chance to live independently.

I. Everyone with ASD should have a long term plan in place at an early age.

The plan would need to be added to the existing IEP and IPP. This would enable a full circle support from parents, teachers, and care providers by laying the foundation at a young age toward living independently.

- Changes in federal regulations all the way down the classroom.
- The school district, in conjunction with the Regional Centers, would be responsible for implementing this action at the initial IEP meeting.
- No apparent opposition identified at this time. This recommendation could easily be supported as an additional objective during the IEP and IPP process.
- By the ASD individuals last IEP the objective would be identified as met or not met. If met then we know the plan put in place for their long term living arrangement was successful.

II. Changes toward state benchmarks in education that include more independent living skills.

Schools Districts need to have more flexibility for ASD individual who would benefit more from the independent living skills rather than the academic benchmarks.

- ASD individual would have a specific objective on both IEP and IPP that mirrors the other for strong implementation.
- The Department of Education would modify existing regulations to implement more living skills, goals, and objectives.
- For the IEP goals and objectives the Department of Education would provide any additional funding to the school districts to implement living skills. I.E. provide washer and dryers for laundry training. For the IPP goals the Regional Centers would provide parent education to help implement the living skills goals. I.E. healthy eating and grocery shopping.
- No apparent opposition at this time as it would be the circle of supports discretion to identify the ASD's individual needs.
- The measurement would occur through the IEP and IPP process already in place to measure goals and objectives.

2. Affordable Housing should be available to individuals with developmental disabilities including those with ASD.

Section 8 vouchers need to be accessible in each community to meet the needs of the DD community.

- The Federal Government would allot a specific amount of the Section 8 vouchers being distributed to provide assistance to the disabled population.
- Changes in Legislation would need to occur to ensure this action be attainable.
- The Department of Housing would be responsible for assessing the applicant's appropriate need and implementing the voucher process. The Regional Center would work in collaboration with the Department of Housing to ensure appropriate referrals.
- Federal funding is currently in place however, a specific allotment needs to be rearranged for DD population.
- We will know if the measure is being met if individuals with developmental disabilities are able to get into section 8 housing through the section 8 voucher process. Tracking measurements should be in place to record the statistics.

3. Creation of an affordable housing directory that is updated and maintained online and easily accessible to individuals with ASD and other developmental disabilities.

The community needs access to the low income housing options in their local area.

- Negotiate with a third party host to provide lists of the different communities' low income housing options. This site would need to be user friendly for individuals with ASD and other developmental disabilities. **OR** have the Regional Centers and Department of Housing included links on their sites to low income housing or Section 8 approved.
- This action would be achieved by advocacy and negotiation with the third party host.
- Financial backing would be provided through those advertising on the site.
- The families and individuals in need of low income housing will support the action. Those opposing the action would be brought forth by the financial needs from another department. For instance, if the funding had to come from the Department of Housing.
- The outcome would be measured by the number of individuals accessing the website and posting information. This would be calculated and easily maintained by the third party host.

4. The promotion of shared housing is crucial.

Independent living does not equal living alone. Individuals with ASD and other developmental disabilities can be encouraged to share housing in order to meet their specific needs. College students do this every year and the practice is encouraged and accepted.

- Regional Centers need to promote shared housing during the IPP process.
- This action will be achieved through the advocacy of Regional Centers.
- Regional Center service coordinators will implement this through the IPP and in house communication with their peers.
- Additional funding is not needed. The encouragement and communication of the service coordinators will help to make this successful.
- It would be supported by those individuals looking for a shared housing opportunity. It would be opposed by those Regional Center consumers receiving services through a different provider than their potential housemate.
 - ❖ Current regulation states that two individuals residing together must utilize the same supported living service vendor to meet a more cost effective service. This regulation would need to be modified to include the flexibility to receive services for consumers through separate agencies. Not all housemates are friends, partners, or family members.

5. Extension of the 529 College Savings Accounts.

Family members of individuals with ASD and other developmental disabilities need a place to save money for their dependent's future living expenses. Many guardians worry about the future of their dependent and with access to a tax deferred savings account they would be able to save more money for that individual with ASD.

- The legislature would need to extend the current law to include guardians of an individual with ASD and other developmental.
- No additional funding is needed at this time.